

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting of the Communities & Environment Committee Held in Committee Room, Livesey House, 7 St John's Hill At 6.00pm on Wednesday 11 June 2025

PRESENT

Councillors B Bentick (Chair), J Daniels, R Dartnall, A Fejfer, R Gratton, E Micklewright and A Mosley.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Clare Turner (Deputy Town Clerk), Stuart Farmer (Operations Manager), Danny Powell (Operations Manager), Ruth Jones (Office Manager), Andy Hall (Youth & Community Manager), Ian Thorpe (Commercial, Markets & Events Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Finance Officer) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

Also in attendance was Tom Coekin (Environment Agency) and one member of the public.

01/25 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF NEW COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Bentick reported that Annual Council had nominated himself to be chair of this committee and Councillor Wilson as Vice Chair.

02/25 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an overview of the Communities & Environment Committee for all new Members of Council. This Committee was a brand-new Committee taking parcels of its work from the original standing committees. Its focus was the Town Council's outward facing engagement and operations with the community including their work with Youth, Team Shrewsbury, Nature Recovery and Climate Change as well as Grant funding.

03/25 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman referred to the Committee Terms of Reference which had been agreed by Full Council on 12 May 2025. Members had no further comments.

RESOLVED:

That the Communities & Environment Committee Terms of Reference be noted.

04/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received and accepted from Councillor Wilson.

05/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY & NON-PECUNIARY) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Shropshire Councillors	Those twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
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06/25 RIVER QUALITY

Tom Coekin, the West Midlands Bathing Waters Lead at the Environment Agency, attended the meeting to provide an update on the recent installation of river quality monitoring equipment. Tom oversaw three bathing sites within the West Midlands: Shrewsbury, Ironbridge and Ludlow.

Tom commented that the water quality at Shrewsbury in 2024 was designated as poor for bathing water standards but although the bathing season had shown as failed, the water quality was clearer than thought. He reminded members that rainfall would hugely affect the water quality and the advice to remember was if it had rained to avoid the river.

On the 9 May, the Shropshire Wild Bathing App was launched with an event held with a number of attendees which included the Shrewsbury MP, Julia Buckley. Ahead of the wild swimming season which started on May 15, the River Severn Partnership and the Environment Agency launched a new bathing water monitoring initiative for the River Severn in Shrewsbury. The Shropshire Wild Bathing App used hourly data from samples to inform users. To date there had been 844 downloads of the app, and it was hoped to have the data for Shrewsbury online shortly.

The scheme built on the success of a similar project that was already in place on the River Teme in Ludlow, where advanced sensors had been installed at a designated wild swimming site. These sensors provided regular updates on water quality, enhancing safety and confidence for swimmers.

Funded by the River Severn Partnership Advanced Wireless Innovation Region, the initiative enabled the Environment Agency to collect daily water quality data remotely, supplementing the manual readings currently taken once a week, with a total of twenty samples taken over the bathing season. Daily readings would not replace statutory testing. They had been successful in a bid for bacteria sensors, which also took daily readings and they hoped to keep the sensors for longer, but that would need funding.

Bacteria and rainfall data were all now in place. Samples were taken in June, and they were already finding that the water quality was better than statutory monitoring.

Councillor Daniels asked if the app was available on the app store and it was confirmed it was. Tom had also provided a QR code for members to use and promote.

The Town Clerk commented that she had regular monthly meetings with Tom and asked Committee if they would be mindful to fund continued bacteria sampling.

Councillor Bentick agreed with the Town Clerk's suggestion of funding as the data it provided to bathers gave them reassurance, so it was important to continue with it. The Town Clerk would discuss costings with the Environment Agency and report back

RESOLVED

That the funding of continued sampling for bathing water be referred to the next Policy & Resources Committee to discuss.

Tom Coekin left the meeting.

07/25 CLIMATE & NATURE RECOVERY FORUM

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Policy & Resources Committee set out the format for the consideration of Councillor led Forum to assist the Committees in making informed decisions. Councillors had expressed an interest in establishing a Climate & Nature Recovery Forum taking into account the sterling work the original committee undertook with a variety of external partners being part of the committee. For a Forum to be considered it needed a member champion to lead the meetings.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That communications be sent out to Councillors for volunteers for a member champion;**
- (ii) That this item be brought back to the next meeting.**

08/25 TEAM SHREWSBURY

08.1 Update on the work of Team Shrewsbury

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities. During the past three months, there was a spike during April on a number of the issues,

however on reviewing the yearly comparisons, they were comparable. Security was regularly receiving positive feedback from businesses thanking them for their work they had undertaken in the Town Centre.

The Office Manager also explained that the next quarter Policing Priorities started in July. Following this meeting information would be shared with Councillors requesting the 3 x policing priorities for the next quarter. These would be submitted to West Mercia Police in readiness for July and ratified at the next Communities and Environment Committee on 3 August. It was again reiterated that West Mercia Police did not have the power to deal with parking issues, under the Traffic Management Act 2004; Shropshire Council were responsible for the enforcement of parking regulations on all highways, and off-street car parks. Further details on this would be circulated to members.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted

08.2 Update on existing work to improve CCTV coverage in the Town Centre

Stuart Farmer, Operations Manager, updated the Committee on CCTV in the town centre. Following a request for funding from Shropshire Council, to assist with the maintenance of the Town centre CCTV system (this was due to the current contractor not wishing to carry out the works going forward), it was agreed that Shrewsbury Town Council would budget £40,000 for the repairs and improvements to the system and that officers from the Town Council would oversee the works and hold the budget.

Following a selection process started by Shropshire Council, a main local contractor had been selected to carry out the required improvement works to the Town Centre CCTV system. KJ Electronics had begun the works in partnership with Potters Electrical for support with power issues and access requirements, this was alongside the existing support provided by Myertech for the control requirements.

Works completed to date included:

- Replacement of monitoring Station in control room
- Fibre connection fault finding in two locations
- Replacement of five cameras
- Power issues resolved at multiple locations

These works had led to a greatly improved system and service to the control room, the fibre inspections resulted in finding cuts in the cable due to historic works. Fortunately, these were able to be rectified by splicing into the cable rather than replacing.

There were still a number of issues outstanding that had been held up by issues beyond Town Council control which included the need to move an inspection chamber on Pride Hill. This was required to be a wall mounted box rather than the underground chamber to prevent water ingress. Some camera works had been delayed to the siting of scaffolding for building works, but these would be rectified as soon as the scaffold was removed.

Stuart commended the contractors involved as they had faced some tricky situations but found solutions.

Councillor Mosley commended the good work that had been put in to getting the cameras operational again and asked if there was any change in the way the service was monitored.

The Town Clerk reported that daytime monitoring continued and there had been no further discussions. Councillor Bentick suggested further discussions with Shropshire Council were required on this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

08.3 Update on the Ranger initiative

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that this Committee would have continued oversight of the maintenance of public safety in the public realm and they had already learnt from the Operations Manager on work to reinvigorate the CCTV system. The Ranger Initiative was equally as important. Made up of Town Rangers (funded by the BID), Quarry Security and Taxi Marshals (both funded by the Town Council) they provided a valuable reassurance role, triaged ASB issues and oversaw ongoing welfare checks of the street community. Ideally as the Town Council remit in the management of Dog PSPO powers comes on stream, the Town Council would like to widen their role beyond just the Quarry and use them in that education and awareness raising of the PSPO to try and address dog issues in a number of areas.

The Town Clerk added that the Town Council had offered the Dog Warden support in managing the Dog Control PSPO in Shrewsbury but had received no feedback. Like all PSPOs the need to show use after the three year period of the PSPO was essential

to ensure renewal. It would also be a chance for the Rangers to provide education and encouragement to residents before the enforcement route had to be taken

Councillor Fejfer asked how many Rangers there were now as he would love to see more. It was confirmed that there were two rangers in the town centre, two security in the Quarry and two taxi marshals on a Friday and Saturday evening.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

09/25 QUARRY

09.1 Update on the Quarry Events Programme

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager updated the Committee on the Quarry Events for 2025.

Despite the cancellation of the Flower Show there was still a healthy calendar of events planned in the Quarry with a wide variety of large and small scale activities taking place.

The 'Summer of Music 2025, live at the bandstand' season was now in full swing with six events already held and ten more to follow across the summer. The feedback received had been extremely positive from both the general public and the bands themselves. The promotion of the program had been extremely effective with good audience numbers reported for all of the dates so far. The promotional leaflets and posters for the summer season had been distributed locally and pre-event posts on the social media platforms of both the Town Council and, perhaps more significantly, My Shrewsbury magazine had gained some very good traction. Indeed, My Shrewsbury reported that their initial story about the season launch had a 'reach' of 90,000 and over 750 likes.

The Town Council had once again held the annual 'desktop exercise' with the organisers of their large events to assist with their security planning, vulnerability assessments, any legislative changes, and licencing requirements. This was extremely invaluable as it provided a detailed site-specific focus to be applied ahead of event season. They had also held an inaugural forum for all the hosts and organisers of large events in and around the town, to better understand the current experience, share ideas, promote best practice and improve communication. Those in attendance reported that this was another extremely worthwhile exercise, and the challenge was how to build on the success of this first event.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

One member of the public left the meeting.

09.2 Review of the Premises License

The Commercial Markets & Events Manager reported that there had been a lot of interest from other promoters regarding the filling of the gaps in the event calendar due to the Shropshire Horticultural Society cancelling the Flower Show this year. This could lead to potential implications for the Premises Licence held by the Town Council for events in the Quarry.

The Commercial Markets & Events Manager & Town Clerk were due to meet Shropshire Council Licensing to look at the possibility and support for a variation in the existing Premises Licence.

Councillor Daniels asked if there were lots of groups wanting to use the Quarry. The Commercial Markets & Events Manager reported that interest was very positive, but it was still a park, and Officers were very mindful that park users were a priority.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

09.3 Update on the cancellation of the Flower Show 2025

This was the first report to be submitted since the abrupt cancellation of this year's Shrewsbury Flower Show through a press statement that was released on Wednesday 16 April by the Shropshire Horticultural Society. Despite holding several show planning meetings with the SHS team the week before this date, no prior notification was given to Officers and the Town Council were as surprised as everyone else by this shock decision. Officers had continued to maintain as close and positive a relationship as possible with the SHS and were committed to provide any support that was needed as the Society considered its options for the future. To date they had made a broad statement stating an intention to hold a smaller show in 2026, but there had been no further details provided. Officers were now looking to only block out the traditional Flower Show weekend and the weekend before and after to allow for build and break.

Councillor Bentick asked if a date had been made for other arrangements. The Town Clerk reported that this wasn't that simple as event organiser needed a long lead time to make arrangements. Current discussions with event organisers was for the 2026 events calendar.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

10/25 PULSE PROPOSAL

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided Committee with a brief overview of a proposal from Pulse to install information hubs in Shrewsbury town centre. The aim was to install state-of-the-art street furniture that incorporated digital services and life-saving equipment to make people feel better connected and safer in their communities.

Pulsehub UK was an 'Urban Innovation Company' that had developed a network of smart communication hubs which could be installed in towns and cities to provide a wide range of functions that benefited the local community. They had been operating successfully in Belfast for over six years and had recently begun working with other towns and cities across the UK. The latest town to sign up was Newton Abbott.

The Pulse Smart Hub was designed to enhance the street scene and were carefully engineered to deliver next generation connectivity with the flexibility to be tailored to meet the specific needs of their locality. They were intended to be used to promote the economic vitality of a town, the safety and well-being of residents and were free of charge for both the user and taxpayer. The hubs provided access to resilient digital communications and lifesaving equipment, with the flexibility to respond to changes in the needs of citizens and the evolution of technology. The company had an experienced team behind it, the founders of which recognised the power of an advertising funded model to deliver social value, taking a keen interest in public spaces and the functions of the public realm. As a company they were committed to engaging with officers to understand the different needs of local people, organisations and community, to develop a tailored approach for Shrewsbury.

The committee were asked if they were happy for officers to continue to engage with Pulse and to develop a more detailed proposal including potential hub locations.

Councillor Bentick asked if there were any testimonials from other Councils? The Commercial Markets & Events Manager agreed to send out the information he had.

Councillor Micklewright asked how they were powered and again, more information would be found out and circulated to members.

Councillor Mosley commented it appeared to be an offer too good to be true but that there were downsides. He commented that the streets were cluttered enough, and he would be sceptical about taking this proposal forward and asked if there were any local towns that Pulse Smart Hubs were operating in that they could visit.

Councillor Dartnall was not keen on the idea as they were just an advertising screen. There needed to be a balance between advertising and assistance to the public.

Councillor Fejfer commented that he had seen similar in Manchester, but the screen was broken. This could happen here also, and the Town Council went ahead with the proposal they would need to check the hubs would be robust.

Councillor Bentick suggested that more information was gathered before a decision was made by Committee. This would include the size of the hubs, cost, locations and testimonials. The Town Council needed to explore the idea further before fully dismissing the idea.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Commercial, Markets & Events Manager obtains further information regarding the Pulse Hubs and brings to a future meeting.**

Councillor Dartnall left the meeting.

11/25 SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM

11.1 Plans for Britain in Bloom Campaign 2025

Danny Powell, Operations Manager, provided the Committee with an update on the Bloom campaign for 2025.

After the success of last year in the Small City Category, Shrewsbury would be judged twice this summer in a combined Small City/City category. This would put them against far bigger Bloom groups and the tour would be for a four-hour duration. They had entered the Heart of England in Bloom and the National Britain in Bloom awards. Judging day for Heart of England in Bloom was 22nd July 2025 and Britain in Bloom was 31st July with judges arriving on the evening of 30 July. Judges for the Heart of England would be Joe Hayden and Jennifer Wharton. Britain In Bloom judges would be Brendan Mowforth and Andrew Jackson.

The judging route would be the same for both days. They would assess the route a few days before to check for any road works which could cause delays. A change could then be made if required. The route had changed from last year to highlight different areas of interest and Volunteer groups. They wanted to show them a range of Town Council and partners working together to improve Shrewsbury for its residents. The Portfolio was nearly complete, and several locations still needed to be contacted with finer details of the day. Staff had been told of the route and once bedding out was finished, then they would look at the work which was required to bring the route up to judging standards. Like last year this would be very little as most work was general maintenance.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

11.2 Shrewsbury in Bloom Working Group Meeting

The notes of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Group meeting held on 20 February, 27 March, 24 April and 22 May 2025 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Group Meeting held on 20 February, 27 March, 24 April and 22 May 2025 be accepted and approved.

12/25 DITHERINGTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

12.1 Discussions with 4All Foundation

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that she and the Town of their visit to Ditherington Community Centre. The 4 All Foundation occupied the Community Centre and operated a range of community activities within the centre. The centre was seen as a valued part of the local community and a hub for daily activities taking place which were run by staff and volunteers.

The 4 All Foundation was an independent charitable organisation delivering local accessible activities, project and initiatives to support the needs and aspirations of the community within Ditherington, as part of a wider organisation who also delivered through outreach, schools and other community hubs.

Ditherington Community Centre was owned by Shrewsbury Town Council with a Service Level Agreement between the two organisations which detailed the commitment and support Shrewsbury Town Council would provide to the 4 All Foundation.

Shrewsbury Town Council were the corporate landlord for the building with the responsibility for the strategic management of the property and asset including its use and ensuring it was a fit-for-purpose platform for service delivery.

A very positive meeting was held in May 2025 between 4 All Foundation, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, where a number of discussions were held relating to the fabric of the building, future plans and building work required to help in the delivery of services. An update was provided by 4 All Foundation on the investment made by them in the replacement kitchen area, outside garden area and general work within the building. An action plan had been developed following this meeting, which was also shown at this meeting.

Shrewsbury Town Council had provision within the Capital Plan and existing budget to complete maintenance for the building. Full costs would be sorted to ensure any works carried out were within these existing budgets.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

12.2 Draft Licence Agreement with 4All Foundation

The Deputy Town Clerk Informed Committee that a service level agreement had been drafted and was almost ready for approval. This Agreement represented a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between 4 All Foundation and Shrewsbury Town Council relating to the leadership of the Ditherington CC Community Hub based in Shrewsbury. This SLA outlined the leadership responsibilities to be undertaken by 4ALL and was understood by the approving Shrewsbury Town Council staff members and councillors. This agreement explained the support Shrewsbury Town Council would provide to 4 All. The proposed Agreement was due to start in October 2025 and would be reviewed after four years.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

13/25 GRANTS

13.1 Establishment of Grants Sub-Committee

The Responsible Finance Officer reported to Committee that the disbursement of the Council's Grants Fund was previously considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Following changes to the Council committee structure applications were now considered by the Communities & Environment Committee with the establishment of a Grants Sub-Committee to improve the process.

As agreed on 12 May 2025, the Grants Sub-Committee had three members for the year: these being Bernie Bentick (Chair), Emma Micklewright (Vice Chair) and Alan Mosley.

The Grants Sub Committee would meet two weeks before the standing committee to allow sufficient time for recommendations to be included on the Communities & Environment agenda. This meeting would be serviced by the RFO & Finance Officer.

13.2 Criteria and timetable for 2025/26 Grants Fund

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that previously, community grants were considered every six months in February and July, and due to the time gap typically in excess of ten applications were considered at each meeting.

This committee meets six times per year so a third submission date would mean applications could be considered every four months in April, August and December, decreasing waiting time for applications to be heard and monies distributed sooner. The budget set for 2025/26 was £40,000 and proposed allocation was Community Grants Fund £23,000 and Local Councillor Grants Fund £17,000 split £1,000 per seventeen wards of Shrewsbury. Previously this amount was £750 but had been unchanged for 10 years and eroded by inflation and thus increased by £250. The timetabling for the year would be as followed:

Deadline for Submission	Consideration by Grants Sub-Committee	Ratification by Community & Environment Committee
16 th July 2025	23 rd July 2025	6 th August 2025
17 th September 2025	24 th September 2025	8 th October 2025
12 th November 2025	19 th November 2025	3 rd December 2025

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the timetabling for the consideration of grants as recommended was approved;**
- (iii) That the guidelines for the Community Grant Fund and the Councillor Grant Funds were approved;**
- (iv) That the £40,000 grant funding allocation be apportioned as follows - £23,000 Community Grant Fund and £17,000 Local Councillor Grant Fund**

14/25 YOUTH

14.1 Young Shrewsbury Activity

The Youth & Community Manager reported to Committee that Young Shrewsbury's Youth activities had returned week commencing 2nd June after the half-term break. All youth clubs held at The Grange, Ditherington, Hive & Lodge Monkmoor were back up and running as normal.

The HAF (Holiday Activity Fund) Summer 2025 activities dates had been agreed for HAF clubs at The Grange and Monkmoor during 2025. Funding had been agreed for the following dates:

The Grange:

- Monday's 21 July, 28 July, 4 August and 11 August between 4pm-7pm
- Wednesday 23 July, 30 July, 6 August and 13 August between 4pm-7pm
- Tuesday 22 July between 4pm-7pm
- Wednesday 23 July between 4pm-7pm

Monkmoor Recreation Ground:

- Thursday 24 July, 14 August, 21 August and 28 August between 2pm-5pm

The Alternative Curriculum (AC) delivery continued this term, with all attendees from Shrewsbury Academy following the renewal of the Service Level Agreement.

The Youth & Community Manager would like to thank Pete and the staff at Weeping cross for accommodating our young people on their recent visit.

The next Youth Council meeting would be held on Thursday 12 June 2025 at the Grange youth centre. The Youth Councillors, supported by Town Councillors, would meet to transact business which included the Stay Safe Day, a draft Youth Strategy and receiving an update from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the new political administration and committee structure together with Shrewsbury Town Council's new induction programme.

Young Shrewsbury's Stay safe day was booked for Wednesday 25 June to be held in the upper part of the Quarry between 11:00am – 2:30pm. This event was free for all to attend.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

14.2 Youth Strategy for Shrewsbury

The Youth & Community Manager reported that a National Youth Strategy was still awaited, and Shropshire Council was proposing to submit a County Youth Strategy in September. Recognising the need to have a local plan for youth he and the Town Clerk had drafted a Youth Strategy for Young Shrewsbury.

This strategy set out the framework for delivering high-quality, targeted youth services across Shrewsbury through "Young Shrewsbury," the youth service arm of

Shrewsbury Town Council. It supported the ambitions of the Education Act 1996 (s507B), providing positive, engaging activities to improve youth well-being and ensured access to appropriate services. The strategy would

- Enable collaboration with schools, community groups, and agencies
- Establish a countywide youth work alliance to reduce duplication and improve reach
- Contribute to the Shrewsbury Town Council's Strategic Vision, the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and Shropshire Council's strategic objectives, including education, safeguarding, skills development, and place-making
- Develop the role of the Youth Council as a key advisory and delivery partner.

Youth Council comments had also been incorporated into the strategy.

Councillor Daniels asked if they had any assistance from private schools and it was confirmed they did, they had a broad Youth Council which brought together everyone on an equal basis.

The Town Clerk commended the strategy as there had been a lot of hard work putting it together and it embedded what Young Shrewsbury did whilst reflecting their status in the County.

Councillor Bentick commented that there was a need to collaborate and to form a youth partnership.

Councillor Mosley commented that the damage social media could do to young people needed to be examined. The Youth & Community Manager confirmed that they embedded safe use of digital devices in all work they did. This matter was also looked at during Youth Council meetings and they did as much as they could to mitigate issues.

RESOLVED:

That upon the support of the Youth Strategy from the Youth Town Council, the document be submitted to Full Council for adoption.

15/25 MARKETS

15.1 Market Activity in Shrewsbury

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided an update to the Committee on all market operations in Shrewsbury.

The indoor market continued to be extremely busy in terms of general footfall, particularly on a Friday, Saturday, and noticeably during school holiday periods.

Footfall in itself didn't guarantee sales, and a small number of traders had reported a relatively challenging period despite the high visitor numbers. In contrast others had reported record sales figures, with the cafes and restaurants often having to manage queues of potential customers. There had been a number of operational and logistical issues in recent weeks which were undoubtedly exacerbated by the age of the building itself and the demands placed upon it by such a busy market. Some of those issues, such as lift breakdowns and external door failures, had become increasingly regular much to the understandable frustration of management, traders, suppliers and customers alike. The collaborative working relationship between the Town and Shropshire Council management teams had again helped in trying to mitigate these issues. However, there is no doubt that without significant, long overdue, investment in the infrastructure of the building, these sorts of issues would have an increasingly negative impact on the operation of the market itself and ultimately the experience being provided to customers. In the meantime, they were continuing to build on this partnership approach with a number of joint initiatives due to provide positive changes in the coming weeks. These included

- New external signage in both entrances
- An update to the large promotional banner in Mardol Head
- New 'award winning' internal signage
- Improvements to the general appearance of the Bellstone entrance
- Development of a partnership with Shrewsbury Food Festival and Oktoberfest
- Develop relationship with 'Highly Flammable Studios' in conjunction with the trader's development group
- Making the 'viewing deck' area fully operational

The Town Council's canopied section continued to operate with 100% occupancy of regular traders and no rental arrears. It was pleasing to report that following a number of recent trader changes the Shropshire Council units were also fully let. The new businesses which opened during these changes had settled in well, further enhancing the trader mix on offer and their feedback had been extremely positive. They were continuing to receive a high level of enquiries for trading space within every area of the market and consequently they were continuing to explore any opportunities to create further capacity.

The 'Late Nights in the Market' events for 2025 were now on their summer break before resuming in the autumn with the final three dates planned for September, November and December. Three nights had already taken place successfully in March, April and May with the participating traders reporting positive customer feedback and no security or logistical issues. The numbers for May were lower than the previous months and this would be taken into consideration when planning the dates for 2026. Preparations were continuing for the celebratory events in September to acknowledge the market building turning 60 years of age.

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided an update on the Sunday Market. The operator of the Sunday Market, 'Places for Community Spaces Ltd,' had continued to report difficulties in attracting and retaining significant numbers of

stallholders and as a result footfall had remained relatively low. The site was undoubtedly challenging given its out of town location and relatively exposed position. With that in mind, Officers had continued to maintain an open dialogue with the operational management team to discuss improvement ideas, including market research, site preparation, alternative financial models, specialist market days, marketing and promotion opportunities, whilst the Town Council remained fully committed to providing assistance wherever possible. 'Places for Community Spaces Ltd' had continued to push for an immediate reversal of their original plans to allow for the introduction of a car boot sale element, which they believed would improve footfall and therefore the financial viability of the Sunday Market. To date this had been based solely on anecdotal feedback they had received from traders and prospective customers.

Given the Town Council's previous concerns of potential reputational damage from car boot sales and indeed recent issues raised by the operators themselves, Officers remained unable to agree to such a change. In the meantime, 'Places for Community Spaces Ltd' had been invited to provide more reliable and quantifiable supporting evidence, as well as the details of a robust plan of how any car boot sales would be managed. Officers had once again re-iterated the position that under the current agreement car boot sales were not permitted on the Sunday Market site and any prospective traders must be turned away.

The Town Clerk confirmed the Town Council would not be accepting car booters unless there was a more robust business case to prove otherwise. The issue of low footfall was an issue with lack marketing and promotion and not the absence of a Carboot Market.

Councillor Mosley commented that the toilets at the Sunday Market location were appalling, and the Town Council needed to put pressure on Shropshire Council to address this issue.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Town Clerk pursue the cleanliness of the toilets with Shropshire Council.**

15.2 Tenant Mix of the Indoor Market

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided an update on the current Tenant Mix of The Indoor Market. Although the indoor market had developed a fantastic reputation and was currently completely full, there was certainly no room for complacency. This positive situation could easily change very quickly, particularly in tough economic conditions and with plenty of competition about. There were numerous factors that contributed towards the success of a market. This could be

location, accessibility, catchment size, effective management, and so on, but the most critical amongst these was the variety of goods on sale, otherwise known as the Tenant/Trader Mix. It was therefore vital to understand what the current mix was, to keep a close eye on new product trends and consider any feedback from customers and traders, with regard to introducing new goods or increasing the availability of a product/service.

Critically, tenant mix and market layout were aimed at creating an attractive market to customers, they were not aimed at, nor do they have the effect of, creating exclusivity for tenants. Therefore, having a written policy setting out business rationale for such decisions was extremely important. They had carried out analysis on their tenant mix in the past, but it had been restricted to the Town Council's panier section and the effectiveness of the reporting had been diluted as a result. Thanks to the improved management relationship and collaborative approach it was pleasing to confirm that they had a report that covered the tenant mix for the whole market. This had been distributed to all Councillors.

The current mix was clearly working and the initial objective when considering any change was for it to be maintained. With the market being completely full there was no financial pressure to just fill space, although this did limit the options available to make any changes to the mix should they wish to do so. On the few occasions where a trader had changed the initial approach had been to look for a replacement within the same use group ideally of equal/higher quality of offer and/or with a key point of difference. If that were not possible then focus would shift to traders of sufficient quality from a completely new use group which would bring further variety to the tenant mix and potentially attract new customers to the market. The final option to be explored would be to look to the existing tenants to see if there was an appetite to expand and/or diversify their offer.

It was generally considered that the detailed Tenant mix remained best suited for the Indoor Market and could also be used as the basis for a written policy that sets out the letting rationale to achieve the appropriate tenant mix. This would also ensure any refusal to let a vacant stall or a request by an existing trader to change their permitted use, would not lead to a breach of the Competition Act.

RESOLVED:

That the Tenant Mix report be approved

16/25 FISHING

The Deputy Town Clerk updated the Committee on the work of Shrewsbury Town Council Fisheries.

At Mousecroft Pool they had recently completed works to make further improvements and maintenance. A new gate with an added kissing gate had been installed complete with new fisheries signage and additional dog littering and control

signage as per council templates. A new stone surface had been added to two thirds of the lane to improve drainage and repair potholes. They had also repaired part of the footpath around the pool and raised one part where it was tending to flood during the winter.

At Radbrook Pool there had been issues with three domestic runner ducks that seemed to have been dumped on the pool sometime last autumn. This had once again encouraged people to feed them with large amounts of bread which led to water quality problems. Also, rats were beginning to increase in numbers of which at some point would start to cause problems with local residents. To help resolve the situation they had found a new home for the three domestic ducks and after consulting with Cuan Wildlife Rescue, they could remove them as they were domestic ducks and take them to their new home. Additionally, they had installed new metal signage to educate people about over feeding ducks and not to feed them bread. They would supply Shrewsbury Town Council with two additional signs that could be used on Springfield Mere where there was similar duck over feeding problems.

At the beginning of June, they would be strimming around the fishing platforms on the Fisheries at Sydney Avenue, Monkmoor and Emstrey in anticipation for the new coarse fishing season which begins on June 16. The Quarry and County Ground would be strimmed at the end of September to leave it alone for the bees and wildlife.

Later this summer they would be replacing three river platforms at Sydney Avenue, Monkmoor and Emstrey as the existing were getting beyond temporary maintenance after winter flooding.

At Oxon Pool they would be adding one more platform on the pool this summer to once again improve access to an old platform location.

The coaching activities for juniors had begun with the first event at Mousecroft Pool on May 24 followed by further events throughout the summer and working in partnership with the Angling Trust and the Canals and Rivers Trust with schools in Shrewsbury. They would also be adding some individual one to one days for youngsters with their parents. They were pleased the demand was increasing year on year.

Water testing continued on the river in eight locations in association with the Angling Trust Water Monitoring Network with Angling Trust. A new Freshwater and Campaigns Officer had been appointed to replace Kristian Kent. His name was Alex Farquhar, and he would be providing up to date reports for the River Severn Catchment in a few days. The fisheries also test the pools frequently to prevent or

take action should they have any water quality issues. Radbrook was tested more frequently as it could be more problematic than the other pools.

With the river season currently closed for coarse fishing they recently apprehended two individuals on the Reabrook without permits and environment agency licences. The two were currently being prosecuted by the Police for theft of fishing rights and fishing without a valid rod licence. This enforcement sends a message to anyone fishing illegally or without permission.

Councillor Bentick asked if the Town Council knew how many young people were using the coaching sessions. The Town Clerk commented that they were well attended, and they worked alongside the Town Council Youth team and other agencies. She confirmed she would obtain a figure of attendees and make Councillor Bentick aware.

RESOLVED:

That the Fisheries report be noted

17/25 CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this Town Council meeting and thanked the staff involved in this meeting. All papers related to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk.